

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
U.S. Embassy, Seoul
Notice of Funding Opportunity: Statement of Interest

Funding Opportunity Title: Request for Statement of Interest (Public Diplomacy Section, U.S. Embassy Seoul)
Funding Opportunity Number: PD-SEOUL-FY22-01
Deadline for Applications: **May 6, 2022, 11:59 p.m. GMT+9**
CFDA Number: 19.040 – Public Diplomacy Programs
Total Amount Available: \$200,000
Award Ceiling: \$100,000
Award Floor: \$1,000

This notice is subject to availability of funding.

A. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The U.S. Embassy Seoul of the U.S. Department of State announces an open competition for organizations or individuals to submit a statement of interest (SOI) to carry out – 1) Innovative programs to advance the U.S.-ROK Alliance with priority going to proposals that engage audiences outside of Seoul; 2) Exchanges between the U.S. and Korea on international human rights, especially gender equity and LGBTQI+ rights, with a preference for programs sending Koreans to the United States; and 3) Programs connecting U.S. and Korean youth leaders in honor of the 140th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Korea and the United States focusing shared democratic values, including the importance of freedom of speech, freedom of information, and healthy debate in diplomacy; 4) Programs connecting Korean and U.S. climate activists and environmental leaders to contribute to both countries' commitment to combatting climate change; and 5) Programs that explores how the U.S. Indo-Pacific Strategy (IPS) benefits Korea and even Korean people's daily lives. Please carefully follow all instructions below.

The submission of the SOI is the first step in a two-step process. Applicants must first submit a concise **1-3 pages** statement of interest designed to clearly communicate the program idea and objectives. This is not a full proposal. The purpose of the SOI process is to allow applicants to submit program ideas for evaluation prior to requiring the development of a full proposal application. Upon a merit review of eligible SOIs, selected applicants will be invited to expand on their program idea(s) by submitting a full proposal application. Full proposals will go through a second merit review before a final funding decision are made.

Program Objectives:

PD Seoul invites SOIs for programs that strengthen U.S.-ROK Alliance through various innovative programming that highlights overlap between the IndoPacific Strategy and the Korean New Southern Strategy, shared values, and promotes bilateral cooperation. All programs must include an American element and be designed to promote increased understanding of U.S. policy and perspectives among important audiences in Korea.

Program Area 1) “Innovative programs” to advance the U.S.-ROK Alliance with priority going to proposals that engage audiences outside of Seoul.

Participants and Audiences:

Participants should reflect the United States government’s commitment to diversity, inclusion, equity, and accessibility

- Key influencers, including but limited to regional media, civil society leaders, and members of regional governments;
- Regional/local media consumers (all demographics), reached through traditional and social media platforms;
- Youth leaders (ages 18-25) and youth interested in studying in the U.S.;
- Alumni of U.S. Government exchange programs; and/or
- Alumni of U.S. universities and other higher education institutions (HEIs)

Program Area 2) Exchanges between the U.S. and Korea on international human rights, especially gender equity and LGBTQI+ rights , with a preference for programs sending Koreans to the United States.

Participants and Audiences:

Participants should reflect the United States government’s commitment to diversity, inclusion, equity, and accessibility

Key influencers, including but limited to regional media, civil society leaders, religious leaders, and members of regional governments; Emerging leaders across sectors

Program Area 3) Programs connecting U.S. and Korean youth leaders in honor of the 140th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Korea and the United States focusing shared democratic values, including the importance of freedom of speech, freedom of information, and healthy debate in diplomacy with priority going to proposals that engage more than 30% of audiences outside of Seoul;.

Participants and Audiences:

Participants should reflect the United States government’s commitment to diversity, inclusion, equity, and accessibility

- Youth (age 16-18) enrolled in Korean high schools.
- Young adults (age 18-29) enrolled at Korean universities or recently graduated.
- Potential members of affinity groups.

Program Area 4) Programs connecting Korean and U.S. climate activists and environmental leaders to contribute to both countries’ commitment to combatting climate change with priority going to proposals that engage more than 30% of audiences outside of Seoul .

Participants and Audiences:

Participants should reflect the United States government’s commitment to diversity, inclusion, equity, and accessibility

- Key influencers, including but limited to regional media, civil society leaders, and members of regional governments; Emerging leaders in the environmental protection movement

Program Area 5) Programs that explores how the U.S. Indo-Pacific Strategy (IPS) benefits Korea and even Korean people's daily lives. The IPS aligns nicely with the ROKG's New Southern Policy (NSP), and the foreign policy elite group understands this; however, both the IPS and the NSP can be difficult for non-foreign policy experts to relate to. The programs are expected to develop a campaign to connect the IPS to regular Korean's lives.

Participants and Audiences:

Participants should reflect the United States government's commitment to diversity, inclusion, equity, and accessibility

- The participants who directly involve with the programs as a member of grantee group and implement the programs can be experts of campaigning and/or marketing who are able to target regular Korean as well as non-foreign policy elites with effective deliverance of information and messages via efficient but influential toolkits, either or both virtual or in-person methods.

B. FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

Length of performance period: **1 to 12 months**

Number of awards anticipated: approximately **5 – 10** awards

Award amounts: awards may range from a minimum of **\$1,000** to a maximum of **\$100,000**

Type of Funding: **FY22 Smith Mundt Public Diplomacy Funds**

Anticipated programs start date: **At least two months after the submission date** (project period, including preparation phase, starts prior to the said condition will not be considered.)

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Funding Instrument Type: Grant, Fixed Amount Award, or Cooperative agreement.

Cooperative agreements are different from grants in that bureau/embassy staff are more actively involved in the grant implementation.

Program Performance Period: Proposed programs should be completed in **12 months** or less. *US Embassy Seoul retains the right to execute non-competitive continuation amendment(s). Any amendment(s) is based on performance, pending availability of funds and is not guaranteed.*

C. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

1. Eligible Applicants

The following organizations are eligible to apply (both in U.S. and ROK). For example:

- Not-for-profit organizations, including think tanks and civil society/non-governmental organizations
- Educational institutions
- Individuals (when applying as an individual, please note that only ‘Direct Cost’ to the subject applicant is allowed to be funded, e.g., travel expenses for the applicant, small amount of program materials)
- Foreign Public Entities (FPE) for example: Public International Organizations and Governmental institutions)

For-profit or commercial entities are not eligible to apply.

2. Cost Sharing or Matching

“Cost Sharing” refers to contributions from the organization or other entities other than the U.S. Embassy. It also includes in-kind contributions such as volunteers’ time and donated venues.

When cost sharing is offered, it is understood and agreed that the applicant must provide the amount of cost sharing as stipulated in its proposal. The U.S. Embassy Seoul Public Diplomacy Section encourages, but does not mandate, that applicants include cost-sharing elements from additional sources in support of their proposals.

3. Other Eligibility Requirements

In order to be eligible to receive an award, all organizations must have a unique entity identifier (Data Universal Numbering System/DUNS number from Dun & Bradstreet), as well as a valid registration on www.SAM.gov. Please see Section E.4 for more information. Individuals are not required to have a unique entity identifier or be registered in SAM.gov.

D. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

1. Application Package

SF424s are not required at this stage.

2. Content and Form of Application Submission

Please follow all instructions below carefully. SOIs that do not meet the requirements of this announcement or fail to comply with the stated requirements will be ineligible.

Content of SOI must include:

A brief project proposal – You may use our template (in the announcement page in the Embassy website)

(A brief project description summarizing goals, objectives outcomes, performance indicators, beneficiaries, and proposed timeline. Documents in English and the anticipated total budget amount in U.S. dollars)

3. Submission Dates and Times

SOIs are due no later than **May 6, 2022, 11:59 p.m. GMT+9**

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4. Other Submission Requirements

All application materials must be submitted by email to **SeoulPDGrants@state.gov**.

E. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

1. Criteria

Each SOI will be evaluated and rated on the basis of the evaluation criteria outlined below.

Quality of Program Idea: SOIs should be responsive to program framework. Projects should have the potential to have an immediate impact leading to long-term, sustainable outcomes. The idea is communicated well and is feasible. SOI's that promote creative approaches to address program objectives are highly encouraged. The proposed timeline should be reasonable.

Ability to Achieve Objectives/Organizational (Individual) Capacity: SOIs should demonstrate the organization's expertise and previous experience in administering programs, preferably similar programs targeting the requested program area. SOIs should address how the program will engage relevant stakeholders and should identify local partners as appropriate. If a local partner is identified SOI should briefly describe the partner's role and experience.

Program Planning: Strong SOIs will include a clear articulation of how the proposed program activities and expected results (both outputs and outcomes) contribute to specific program objectives and the overall program goal. Objectives should be ambitious, yet measurable, result-focused, and achievable in a reasonable time frame.

Review and Selection Process

A Grants Review Committee will evaluate all eligible SOIs.

All eligible SOIs will be reviewed against the criteria listed above. SOIs are reviewed individually against the criteria and not against competing SOIs. For a balanced review all panelists will review the first page of the SOI up to the page limit and no further. The panel may provide conditions and/or recommendations on SOIs to enhance the proposed program.

Following the review, any successful SOI applicants will be contacted directly via an email and instructed to submit full applications. A full application will include:

- Project Proposal (Full), Project Budget Narrative – Templates will be provided separately.
- SF-424 (Application for Federal Assistance – organizations) or SF-424-I (Application for Federal Assistance --individuals)
- SF424A (Budget Information for Non-Construction programs)
- SF424B (Assurances for Non-Construction programs) for individual or organization exempted from registering in SAM.

Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM.gov) (NOTE: This section is required and not optional, except for NOFOs targeting applications only from individuals.)

Required Registrations:

All organizations applying for grants (except individuals) must obtain these registrations. All are free of charge:

- www.SAM.gov registration which will generate a UEI
- NCAGE/CAGE code

Any applicant with an exclusion in the System for Award Management (SAM) is not eligible to apply for an assistance award in accordance with the OMB guidelines at 2 CFR 180 that implement Executive Orders 12549 (3 CFR, 1986 Comp., p. 189) and 12689 (3 CFR, 1989 Comp., p. 235), “Debarment and Suspension.”

The Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) is one of the data elements mandated by Public Law 109-282, the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA), for all Federal awards. SAM.gov is the Federal government's primary database for complying with FFATA reporting requirements. OMB designated SAM.gov as the central repository to facilitate applicant and recipient use of a single public website that consolidates data on all federal financial assistance. Under the law, it is mandatory to register in SAM.gov.

Starting April 2022, the UEI will be assigned when an organization registers or renews its registration in SAM.gov at www.SAM.gov. To access SAM.gov an organization is required to have a Login.gov account. Organization can create an account at <https://login.gov/>. As a reminder, organizations need to renew its sam.gov registration annually.

US-based organizations: A CAGE code will be automatically assigned when the U.S. organizations registers in www.sam.gov. CAGE must be renewed every 5 years. Site for CAGE: <https://cage.dla.mil/Home/UsageAgree>. Grantees may be asked for more information to finalized and must comply.

Foreign-based organizations: Must apply for a NCAGE code before registering in SAM.gov. Go to: <https://eportal.nspa.nato.int/AC135Public/CageTool/home> to apply for a NCAGE code. NCAGE codes must be renewed every 5 years.

It is in the organization's best interest to check if their CAGE/or NCAGE codes are active. Organizations are required to register/or renew their CAGE or NCAGE codes **prior** to registering or renewing www.sam.gov. Both registration and renewals for both CAGE and NCAGE can take up to 10 days. Organization's legal address in NCAGE/CAGE must mirror www.sam.gov.

www.sam.gov requires all entities to renew their registration once a year in order to maintain an active registration status in SAM.gov. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure it has an active registration in SAM.gov.

If an organization plans to issue a sub-contract or sub-award, those sub-awardees must also have a unique entity identifier (UEI number). Those entities can register for a UEI only at SAM.gov.

If an organization does not have an active registration in SAM.gov prior to submitting an application, the application will be deemed **ineligible**. All organizations applying for grants (except individuals) must obtain these registrations, the latter are free of charge.

Note: As of April 2022, a DUNS number is no longer required.

However, if a SOI is accepted for a full proposal application, the organization must obtain a UEI and have an active SAM.gov registration before submitting its full proposal application. Therefore, we recommend starting the process of obtaining a SAM.gov registration as soon as possible. The process can take several weeks. Please note there is no cost associated with UEI or SAM.gov registration.

F. FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

Administrative and National Policy Requirements

Terms and Conditions: Before submitting the SOI, applicants should review all the terms and conditions and required certifications which will apply if a full proposal application is requested and awarded, to ensure that they will be able to comply. These include: 2 CFR 200, 2 CFR 600, and the Department of State Standard Terms and Conditions which are available at: <https://www.state.gov/about-us-office-of-the-procurement-executive/>.

G. FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACTS

If you have any questions about the SOI application process, please contact: **SeoulPDGrants@state.gov**

Note: We do not provide any pre-consultation for application related questions that are addressed in the SOI. Once an application has been submitted, State Department officials and staff — both in the Department and at embassies overseas — may not discuss this competition with applicants until the entire proposal review process is completed.